



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20240

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS/BAV

SEP 11 1998

To: Assistant Regional Directors - External Affairs

From: Acting Assistant Director, External Affairs *Michael R. Smith*

Subject: Revised Form DI-551 (Audiovisual Authorization Request)

The Department has revised and shortened the form for obtaining Departmental approval for audiovisual products prior to production. Also, approval for all productions involving less than \$50,000 can now be cleared by the Audio Visual Office for the Department (located in the Department's Office of Communications). Those over that amount will still require approval by the Director, Office of Communications.

The Service has a good record obtaining approval on its projects. As those of you who have submitted a 551 in the recent past know the Office of Broadcasting and Audiovisual Services has requested that each request for approval contain a brief memorandum describing the general rationale for the project, who will be doing the work, a contact, and a description of how the product will be distributed. This short narrative statement summarizing the project and why it is needed provides additional important information not called for in the rather brief 551.

The approval process calls for a completed form 551 to include the names and signatures of the appropriate Assistant Regional Director for External Affairs or the person they have designated to coordinate approvals in the Regional Office and by appropriate Assistant Directors in the Washington Office. These surnames should be placed in the upper right hand corner of the 551 prior to submittal to the Office of Broadcast and Audiovisual in Washington for completion of the review and approval process.

It is important to note that an approved 551 is required prior to any expenditure of funds on a proposed project and before any actual production is commenced. The 551 process is to be undertaken for all audiovisual productions portraying the Service, regardless of the source of funding, with the following exceptions.

1. Service-use only. Training films or videos produced for employee use and not intended to be shown to the public.

2. One-time use. Audiovisual presentations to be used as one-time accompaniments to speeches or other oral presentations by Service officials.
3. Stock footage specifically for "B-roll" use; a collection of footage and representative shots of a subject not intended for use in a particular audiovisual presentation and often offered to representatives of the television news media for use in their stories.

Please contact appropriate Contracting and General Services personnel in the Regional Office of the new 551 form (copy enclosed) and the requirement for a narrative statement. If you have questions, please contact Craig Rieben in Broadcasting and Audiovisual at (202) 208-5611 or e-mail [craig\\_rieben@fws.gov](mailto:craig_rieben@fws.gov).

Enclosure